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the Communist Party was in charge of the expulsion of the Germans from the Western territories, and the settlement of Poles in their place. There Gomulka, then General Secretary of the Party, was responsible).

Because in the popular view the Communist Party bore the greatest responsibility for the expulsion, there was a much higher percentage of Communist supporters among the new Czech settlers in the Sudeten areas than in any other part of the country, even than in the big towns where large numbers of workers were concentrated. In the 1946 general elections, in the districts of Jablonec and Turnov the Communist Party polled 70 per cent of the votes, in Kadaň 62 per cent, Falknov 59 per cent, in Aš over 50 per cent, and so on. (The situation in the Western Territories of Poland was similar, hence the Communist leaders insisted on giving highly disproportionate representation to these areas in the general elections of January, 1947).

The whole of the Sudeten population, except some tens of thousands of indispensable skilled workers, was expelled from the country. Those who remained had to do compulsory labour for a minimum of twelve hours a day, and, if the employer thought it necessary, fifteen hours. The National Committees organised this compulsory labour. According to their decrees, the German workers in Czechoslovakia were forbidden to belong to trade unions, were excluded from social benefits, had to give a quarter of their wages as reparations to the state, were not entitled to holidays, and their children were not allowed to attend school.

In the first few days after the defeat of the German army in Czechoslovakia, some cracks were made in the wall of national animosity by open fraternisation between Czech and German workers. For instance, a number of rank and file communists in Bodenbach began to publish a daily paper in Czech and German; it was called *Rudý Prapor—Rote Fahne.* It was short-lived, for Nosek immediately prohibited the publication of any German paper or of any paper in two languages one of which was German.

It is ironical to note that the excesses against the Germans in Czechoslovakia were taking place at the same time—with the Red Army's entry into Germany—as the Russian